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DSSD CENSUS 2000 PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM SERIES #0-10

MEMORANDUM FOR Brian Monaghan
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Attention: Management Training Branch
 Field Division

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Subject: Transient Night Observation Trip Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The goal of Transient Night (T-Night) is to enumerate people who may be missed in the traditional enumeration of housing units and group quarters because they have a mobile lifestyle. These are people who permanently live in a recreational vehicle or on a boat, or who work at racetracks, fairs, and carnivals. T-Night was a one day operation that was conducted from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. on March 31, 2000.

This memorandum documents my observation of the T-Night operation in Oakland, California on March 31, 2000.

II. OBSERVATIONS

My first observation was at a racetrack. The population was expected to speak Spanish only. The crewleader decided to use Spanish Individual Census Reports (ICR) instead of having the enumerators translate the English enumerator questionnaires (EQ) and transcribe the questionnaires later. Since I do not speak Spanish I asked if there was another T-Night location that I could observe.

Next I observed an enumeration at a marina. The crewleader divided the docks into assignments and sent an enumerator to each one. The enumerator I observed was very friendly and although the occupants were a little apprehensive at first, the enumerator was able to convince them to give him the information. The enumerator I observed was able to get long form information without a problem.

One of the docks was locked and while we waited for someone to unlock the gate, a boater told the enumerator that there was nobody living on their boat on that particular dock. Once we were let in, the enumerator went to every slip and he was able to find two boats which did indeed have occupants.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Although the correct questionnaire for this operation would be the EQ, the crewleader decided to use the Spanish ICR instead of having the enumerators translate the English enumerator questionnaires with the intention of transcribing the questionnaires later. The questions are not comparable for these two questionnaires.

I was impressed that the enumerator did not take the word of the boater who had told him that there were no occupants on that particular dock. Especially since this resulted in the enumeration of four persons who would have otherwise been missed.

For security purposes, the docks were enclosed with locked gates and the enumerators had to depend on boaters letting them in to conduct the enumeration since the harbor master had already left for the day. Based on my observations, this did not appear to be a problem.

I thought the enumeration went very well. While I did not see the enumerator fill in the "Just In Case" box to indicate that this questionnaire was completed during T-Night I am not sure if that was already done in my absence.

I was very much impressed by the enthusiasm of the enumerators to do a good job. It was obvious to me that they take great pride in their work.

cc: DSSD Census 2000 Procedures and Operations Memorandum Series Distribution List
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